DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 211 CS 010 933

AUTHOR Luke, Allan
TITLE Reading and Critical Literacy: Redefining the "Great Debate."
PUB DATE May 92
NOTE 22p.; Paper presented at the Annual New Zealand Conference on Reading (18th, Wellington, NZ, May 10-13, 1992).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Critical Reading; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Literacy; Models; Politics of Education; Power Structure; *Reading Instruction; Reading Skills; *Social Stratification; Student Development

ABSTRACT

Literacy may be defined as a set of changing practices and techniques with the social technology of writing. The distribution of literate practices by institutions has been tied up with knowledge and power in societies. Who gets what kinds and levels of literacy from schooling is directly related to the "division of literate labor." This is reflected in stories of reading practices in a 13th century monastery in Toronto (Ontario, Canada) in English-as-a-Second-Language instruction for women immigrants from the Azores; and in literacy instruction among the Vai, a tri-literate Western African tribe. In all three examples, and in current schooling, three elements appear: (1) a corpus of texts; (2) selected genres for reading and writing; and (3) events and practices. A new four-part model permits a rethinking of how instruction shapes reading practices. The key elements of proficient, critical reading as social practice include coding, semantic, pragmatic, and critical competence. Coding competence means learning the role of code breaker. Adapting to the role of text participant is what is meant by semantic competence. Pragmatic competence involves learning to be a text user. The ability to analyze text implies critical competence. A socially critical literacy program would systematically introduce children to the four elements of reading practice at all stages of literacy instruction. In "postmodern" society, nothing short of a critical social literacy will suffice. (Twenty-nine references are attached.) (SG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Allan Luke
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED345211

READING AND CRITICAL LITERACY:

REDEFINING THE 'GREAT DEBATE'

Allan Luke
School of Education
James Cook University of North Queensland
Townsville, Queensland
Australia - 4811

Paper of the 18th New Zealand Conference on Reading
Wellington, May 10-13, 1992

CS010933

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

READING AND CRITICAL LITERACY:
REDEFINING THE 'GREAT DEBATE'

Allan Luke, James Cook University of North Queensland

Introduction

This paper makes two key points. First, I define literacy as a set of changing practices and techniques with the social technology of writing. In both historical and contemporary contexts, the shaping and distribution of literate practices by institutions like schools and churches have been tied up with knowledge and power in societies. Who gets what kinds and levels of literacy from schooling are directly related to the "division of literate labor" (Luke, in press/a) in contemporary societies, and distribution of status, wealth and power in late capitalist economies. My initial claim, then, is that literacy teaching involves what Raymond Williams (1977) calls a "selective tradition" of texts, genres and practices.

Across Western nations, substantive efforts have been made to reshape the literary canon and to rethink the significance of women's, ethnic minority and working class values in the texts of literacy instruction. Further, current Australian debates are being waged over which the sociocultural power and value of the genres taught to children in primary and secondary English, language arts and reading curricula (e.g., Threadgold, 1989).

My second point here is to propose a model for rethinking how instruction shapes "reading practices", an equally key element of the selective tradition (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991). I here broadly outline a four part model of reading as social practice (Freebody & Luke, 1990). My aim in this second part of the paper is to cut across what has been called the 'great debate' over how best to teach reading, and to suggest that different programs and approaches to literacy provide different constructions of what counts as reading. The model

offered here is meant as a guide for teachers, teacher educators and curriculum developers to address the normative, ultimately political, decisions about how we shape the practices of reading in the classroom, to what ends, and in whose interests.

Selective Traditions of Literacy

Let me begin with three scenes that might better enable us to frame and 'see' what is at stake in the teaching of literacy. Each describes students learning how to handle the social technology of written language, and in each literacies are being shaped and constructed differently.

The first scene is located in a medieval monastery in Western Europe, circa 1200. A monk is training a novice at scriptural exegesis. His practice entails copying and, because silent reading most likely hadn't been invented yet, he reads aloud. The read the text in unison. And the monk, the expert, models the correct interpretation of the text - be it Jesuit, Franciscan or that of another order. For those included in this is exclusive class of literati, long before Reformation campaigns for universal literacy, writing entailed the copying and illustration of manuscripts. Reading entailed hermeneutics, the translation of the Word for lay persons and for theological debate. To be literate in Medieval society was to have access to a powerful cultural archive. Different interpretations, different reading practices for the same scriptures, marked out the boundaries between sects, between denominations, and indeed between warring inquisitors. Note also that, European women in the Early Modern West tended to be systematically denied access to the reading and writing of laws, sacred texts, histories and other texts of power.

The second scene is from urban Toronto and is recounted in the Canadian film Starting from Nina (1978). There a group of women immigrants from the Azores are taking ESL classes with a

community worker. These classes are social gatherings, when they talk and write about their jobs as domestic cleaners, about their lives as mothers and wives. The classes begin bilingually but gradually become more centred on English: the community worker goes to the blackboard to record key words and the women move towards writing their stories, towards what Freire and Macedo (1987) call "reading the world and the word". Writing, then, becomes a means for interpreting the world, learning to cope with it on a day-to-day basis, and taking action to better their and their families' situations. This scene is replayed daily in many adult literacy programs based on Freire's "critical pedagogy" (e.g., Fiore & Elsasser, 1988).

The third scene is from Scribner and Cole's (1981) study of the Vai. One of the principal Western African tribes in modern Liberia, the Vai are tri-literate. As in many developing countries, women and girls are excluded from literacy instruction and textual work. Vai males become literate in three languages: Vai, Arabic and English. Each is affiliated with particular cultural activities and economic spheres: personal and face-to-face business transactions are undertaken in Vai; religious practices in Arabic; and schooling and book learning for commerce, further study and government occurs in English. Here is Scribner and Cole's description of the discipline of literacy study.

> children...bend over their individual boards with passages from the Quran written on them. For 2 hours or more the singsong of their chanting can be heard, accompanied occasionally by the admonishment from the teacher, or the snap of a small whip landing on the backside of an errant student (Scribner & Cole, 1981:30).

Learning Arabic then, entails oral memorisation and recitation. The Quran means what it says, literally, and any

matters of 'interpretation' are taken care of by the cleric. Hence, reading in Arabic, unlike reading in English which others might learn in government-sponsored schools, entails rote recall. According to Scribner and Cole, differing educational systems, secular, non-secular, and community, shape the cognitive and social processes and consequences of literacy in radically different ways.

There are common threads running across these three scenes. All are what Heath (1986) describes as "literacy events", social interactions around text. First, literacy in all three cases involves a set of ritual social behaviours, and there is a close match between the contexts of teaching and learning and the actual sites of use, between the instructional site and the later instance of use. "Transfer of training" from classroom to community life, the problem which seems to plague our efforts, does not become a significant factor. In all three instances, literacy is not a set of decontextualised skills, but is a demonstrably significant cultural practice. That is, it is about something, something valued by the community and culture, something vital for its participants.

Second, all entail a expert/apprentice relationship, where an adult or elder with advanced competence takes the uninitiated through a set of structured activities toward more complex and elaborated competences. Such an emphasis on the role of social context, and of expert assistance in the teaching of literacy is emphasised in the cultural psychologies of Vygotsky and Luria. Michael Cole, Peg Griffin and colleagues speak of literacy learning in terms of acquiring a range of culture-specific ways of handling and conceptualising what can be done with the technologies of written language (Cole & Griffin, 1986; Cole, 1988; Newman, Griffin & Cole, 1989).

But, you might be thinking, "bias" and 'indoctrination" are also at work in these cases: whether Franciscan, feminist, or Quranic. Indeed you're right, and this points to a key third

characteristic of literacy. Try as we might to avoid it, literacy historically has been tied up with the constitution of ideology, of beliefs, of identities. When we teach the word, we also disburse a way of reading the world, with all of its wrinkles of power and politics: what counts as "right" reason and action, what is apparently "natural" about men and women, blacks and whites, what an "authentic" response to literature looks like and so forth. I find it quite ironic that many secondary content-area reading experts now speak about "reading to learn", as if learning to read about the world, even by default doesn't occur with the most bland basal series or the most formalist secondary literature course. At the heart even of skills or rote learning agendas are powerful selective traditions: reading and writing are always about something.

As Gee (1990) has recently commented, reading and writing are transitive verbs: one always has to read and write something. From its very onset reading entails the development and elaboration of what Heath (1986) has called "ways of taking", moral epistemologies and standpoints on the world. There are no exemptions to this central element of literacy teaching. When we teach reading, we selectively socialise students into versions of the world, into possible worlds, and into versions of the horizons and limits of literate competence. Whether we choose Possum Magic or the Simpsons, Shakespeare or Garcia-Marquez, the writing of lyric poetry or rap, educational programs are based on normative, political decisions about who should use reading and writing to what end (Lankshear & Lawler, 1987). It is through educational programs and school systems that modern societies shape what a citizenry does and, as importantly, doesn't do, with written texts.

I have chosen these three distant scenes because, as Williams suggests, those of us who work in modern secular schooling have an almost in-built defence mechanism against seeing the relationships between education, literacy and power. It is as

difficult as seeing a pattern which connects in a painting or poem that we are working on. In many ways, we are so close to the work in question that it is increasingly difficult to "make the familiar strange", as cultural anthropologists put it. While we can so easily spot the way that literacy is being shaped for particular social purposes and political ends in other cultures, we turn to our own and instead see the constructions of our own discourses, of our own educational sciences (Luke, 1991): not social control or regulation at work, but rather 'natural' developmental stages, the 'universal' power of particular pieces of literature, or 'innate' proclivities of particular groups of children. My point here is that powerful inclusions and omissions are centrally at work in our own curriculum and teaching.

Literacy comprises malleable practices, and we can shape it in various ways. We can make it rote recall, copying or 'talking about the world' as some of the foregoing teachers did. We can shape it to entail singing and writing about the 'self'; we can stage it to principally entail answering questions about texts. Many claims have been made about 'natural' processes and procedures of literacy, about the universal appeal of particular texts, etc. I would argue that such claims are fundamentally in error. Literacy is a social technology shaped via cultural artifice and knowledge, social activity and institutional power. All education systems offer a selective tradition, a set of inclusions and exclusions from a range of possible values and ideologies, texts and genres, practices and skills. In each of the foregoing examples, and in current schooling, instruction frames up for children three interconnected elements of a literate tradition:

(1) **a corpus of texts**: particular authors and voices, ideologies and histories are deemed as worth reading;

(2) **selected genres for reading and writing**: particular text types have evolved to perform particular social

functions; some feature prominently in curricula, others are excluded;

(3) **events and practices**: particular ways of constructing, handling and interacting with text are sequenced, staged and rehearsed in instruction.

These selections are not arbitrary. Educational and political systems introduce children to versions of "the" culture which are "powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural definition and identification" (Williams, 1977:115). In textbooks and lessons, a selective tradition is embodied in particular versions of cultural knowledges and beliefs, identities and characterisations which become authorised school versions of what 'we' allegedly know and value. What this means is that children in schools are socialised into dominant versions of a "shaping past and pre-shaped present", represented to them as 'their' culture, as a 'natural, given order, as the way things are or should be. In schools children are, furthermore, initiated into procedures for handling text: whether handwriting patterns, alphabet drills, or question answering procedures. These too come to appear as 'natural', 'necessary' or 'essential' to becoming literate.

All the while other literatures, genres and ways of dealing with text remain silenced and omitted. These are particularly hard for teachers to uncover, to articulate, to frame - precisely because we as teachers are effectively the products of these same dominant literate traditions and cultures which we are charged with propagating. In this way, selective traditions of literature and literacy are ideological. That is, they act covertly in the interests of dominant groups, precisely because they take on the appearance of being univocal (one-voiced), 'natural' or based on an alleged consensus of interests (e.g., "What every Australian believes", "the Classics of British literature", "the basics").

Selective traditions have political consequences in two ways: first, as I have argued here, they represent a particular version of social and natural world as 'the' received version. Seen in sociological and curricular terms, literacy training represents and reproduces the values, beliefs and identities of dominant cultures and classes (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1990). In many classrooms, that corpus of knowledge and texts is not available for criticism, analysis and second-guessing, but stands "beyond criticism" (Luke, deCastell & Luke, 1989), an object for recitation, agreement and reproduction.

Second, many teachers' best efforts notwithstanding, schools produce differing kinds and levels of literate competence and achievement, a key link in the cross-generational reproduction of economic inequality (Cook-Gumperz, 1986). Selective traditions are tied to a differential distribution of texts, genres and practices. That is, through schooling, not all children get access to powerful texts and genres and powerful ways of using texts. It is to this second problem that I now want to turn.

Reframing Reading Practice: A Model

Thus far I have argued that literacy is a malleable social technology, that for 24 centuries cultures put it to work for a wide range of purposes, social and intellectual, economic and spiritual. How we choose to shape literacy in schools thus is not a matter for uncritical common sense, or simply a matter of finding the right scientific prescription for solving the problems of 'reading' or 'writing' failure once and for all. I have also suggested that there is a differential production of literacy: that all students do not get equal access to cultural knowledge and social power via literacy, and that this distribution has continued in Western countries to fall along the lines of class, colour and gender.

This is not news. There has been a longstanding commitment of reading educators to dealing with the relationship between reading illiteracy and socioeconomic disenfranchisement. This legacy extends back to the US National Right to Read Programs of the US, and includes the work of Kathleen Au and others with Hawaiian children in the KEEP project, the efforts of Clay and colleagues with Reading Recovery in this country and others, and recent developments of 'enfranchising', progressive programs by Carole Edelsky (1991) and colleagues in Arizona. In this context, it would appear that what is key is not to convince reading educators of the existence of a 'politics of literacy', for most would recognise the relationship between 'reading' and poor school achievement on the one hand, economic and sociopolitical marginality on the other. What is at issue is how to deal with it. The logical starting place would be to begin with what is most immediately under the control of classroom teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers and consultants: to critique and reconstruct the texts, genres and practices of current selective traditions.

In all Western countries, there are ongoing efforts by many teachers and curriculum developers to question and rebuild the canon of early literacy training. These include attempts to select and include children's literature which portrays and includes a far wider range of cultural identities and actions, and to include a far broader range of portrayals of women and people of colour. They also include ongoing attempts to make the voices and patterns of minority and working class children's community life, language and culture focal point of early literacy instruction. Current Australian debates centre on questioning and expanding the range of genres for reading and writing in the classroom. But these changes may be <u>necessary</u> but not <u>sufficient</u> for remaking a selective tradition.

Let me turn to the second part of my paper: a model for

reframing reading practices. Most of this audience would be somewhat familiar with the acrimonious history of 20th century reading instruction: from the debate between 3R's traditionalism and emergent 'scientific' basal reading approaches in the 1910s and 20s; to phonics versus word recognition debate of the 1930s, 40s, 50s; to debates between top down and bottom up models of reading in the s; to debates between whole language advocates and those who would continue with skills-based programs; to debates between those who argue for 'scientific' approaches to literacy and those who would argue for critical political approaches to reading pedagogy. All of us here would have found ourselves in one camp or another, arguing for one approach or another during our careers. And this is not to mention the scores of now long forgotten or discarded methods, programs or approaches which promised to solve the problem of reading failure once and for all (cf. Luke, 1988).

Each is based on the claim that it is best at dealing with reading failure. But I here want reframe these claims in light of what we now know about a selective tradition. If, as I have argued here, literacy is a 24 century old technology, with extremely malleable practices, the picture begins to look a bit different.

It would be hard, for instance, to accuse the Mullahs teaching Quranic literacy to Vai students of failing to teaching reading as 'meaning making', of failing to recognize the active role of learners in the construction of meaning. It would be problematic to accuse them of not adequately teaching their students to criticise or second guess the Prophet and the Book. Likewise, it would be nonsensical to critique Medieval monastic orders for not teaching their novices what real writing is about: stories of the individual self. It would be quite a few years before the 'individual' was invented, and a few years more before writing became affiliated with the 'spontaneous' overflows of powerful

emotion in Preface to Lyrical Ballads. Furthermore, as mentioned, silent reading was not a widespread practice.

I would make a similar claim about current programs. That to assess them we should shift away from the question of whether they produce better or worse readers. Instead, our questioning should focus on how differing instructional emphases construct and shape particular kinds of reading practice. In this light, the question becomes: What kinds of literate practice are produced by particular programs?

Peter Freebody of Griffith University and I have developed a model to describe what we see as four key elements of proficient, critical reading as social practice in late-capitalist societies:

CODING COMPETENCE: learning your role as code breaker (How do I crack this?)
SEMANTIC COMPETENCE: learning your role as text participant; (What does this mean?)
PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE: learning your role as text user (What do I do with this, here and now?)
CRITICAL COMPETENCE learning your role as text analyst (What is this text trying to do to me?)

Table 1: ELEMENTS OF READING AS CRITICAL SOCIAL PRACTICE

(Source: Freebody & Luke, 1990)

In what follows I want to signal some of the challenges that each presents students and teachers.

Coding Competence: Learning Your Role as Code Breaker

Mastery of the technology of written script requires engagement with two aspects of the technology: the relationship between spoken sounds and written symbols, and the contents of that relationship. I here refer to work which Stanovich (1986), Clay and colleagues at this conference will elaborate. That work concludes that the failure of individuals to acquire proficiency with the structured nature of spoken language and its components is a major factor in reading failure and can lead to avoidance strategies which extend far beyond primary schooling. These findings are corroborated in Johnston's (1985) study of adult illiterates, who reported that they experienced 'success' in early reading instruction through memory and the use of pictorial aids, but that their lack of resources for contending with the technology of writing became a source of withdrawal and failure in school.

I am not here providing justification for isolated "skill and drill" approaches to phonics and word recognition. For learning to read effectively entails far more than this. I am arguing that knowledge of the alphabet, grapheme/phoneme relationships, left to right directionality and so forth are necessary but not sufficient conditions for using literacy for particular social functions in actual contexts. As Cole and Griffin (1986) suggest, it is a matter of providing understandings of what that technology entails and of practicing its use with aid of an accomplished text user. Part of mastering that technology entails learning your role as text participant.

Semantic Competence: Learning Your Role as Text Participant

By semantic competence, I refer to development of those knowledge resources to engage the meaning systems of text. Cognitive, literary and semiotic theories of reading together stress the importance of topical and textual knowledge in the reading of new texts and genres. In effect, readers' bring complex intertextual resources to reading (Luke, in press/c), a stock of knowledge built up from prior readings of texts of various media, everyday community experiences and so forth. These resources are neither universal nor wholly idiosyncratic, but tend to take on culture-specific configurations and patterns.

This signals that the use of texts about which learners have limited background knowledge can be a hindrance to comprehension. This would be particularly significant in the case of instruction for ethnic and linguistic minorities, where learners bring varying bodies of cultural knowledge to bear on the text. However, beyond the use of 'relevant' text, it also underlines the need for explicit instructional introduction to those texts and genres that make new culture- and even gender-specific meaning demands on students.

Pragmatic Competence: Learning Your Role as Text User

A reader may be a fluent decoder and able to construct meaning, but be wholly unfamiliar with how, where, and to what end a text might be used. As ample ethnographic studies now demonstrate, reading occurs in boundaried, identifiable literacy events. These events are far from spontaneous and arbitrary but occur in the contexts of institutional life and entail social relations of power. There readers learn what the culture counts as an adequate use of reading in a range of school, work, leisure and civil contexts. In the structured 'language games' around text, particular conventions are in play regarding how to get the floor, what can be said about a

text, by whom, when, and so forth. Being a successful text user, then, entails developing and practicing social and sociolinguistic resources for participating in 'what this text is for, here and now'.

Put quite simply, if we view literacy as not a solitary, individual act or mental process, but rather as a set of social practices undertaken with others, then indeed students must learn what to do with text in a broad range of social contexts. Whether one is trying to make sense of a loan contract, planning a job-related task, or participating in a classroom lesson about a text, one needs to how to 'do' reading as a pragmatic, face-to-face competence. Unfortunately, various studies of literacy in community and work contexts indicate that many school programs expose students to very limited, school-like reading events, many of which have limited transfer to out-of-school contexts.

Critical Competence: Learning Your Role as Text Analyst

One may be able to decode a passage of text adequately, and bring to bear the relevant knowledge resources to make sense of a text, and further be able to use the text to meet particular purposes at work, school or home. But all of these can remain fundamentally acritical procedures: that is, they can entail accepting, without question, the validity, force and value of the text in question. A crucial part of learning text analysis entails, as Freire and colleagues insist, using and juxtaposing one's life and community experiences with those portrayed in a text. This can be a key route to critically 'second guessing' a text.

However, I here want to suggest a model of critical literacy which also explicitly stresses the understanding of the complex lexicogrammatical devices that texts use to portray the world and to position and construct their readers

(Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1981). Kress (1985) differentiates between 'subject positions' and 'reading positions'. Drawing from systemic linguistics and poststructuralist discourse analysis he examines how texts use various lexicogrammatical devices to both portray a fictional world and to construct and position a reader. For instance, through particular wordings, transitivity and modality structures, texts build up a particular ideological version of events, social relations and the natural world. Through other resources, like pronominalisation, sentence modes, and so forth, texts position readers, in effect hailing readers and inviting particular interpretations (see Fairclough, 1989).

By "critical competence" then, I refer to the development of a critical metalanguage for talking about how texts code cultural ideologies, and how they position readers in subtle and often quite exploitative ways. My argument is that in order to contest or rewrite a cultural text, one has to be able to recognize and talk about the various textual, literary and linguistic, devices at work.

What Will Count as Reading?

I promised a simple argument, and as usual the simple has turned out to be somewhat more complex than anticipated. I began by showing how different cultures and epochs have constructed literacy differently, stressing varied texts and genres, events and practices. I also pointed out that who learned to do what with particular texts, genres and practices is tied up with the distribution of literate power and work in a society.

As noted, the critique and analysis of texts and genres selected is central to rebuilding literacy teaching. But Freebody and I have tried to articulate a grid for rethinking the selective tradition of reading practices. Differing programs stress and shape what is entailed in reading. Many

traditional primary programs stress, for instance, code breaking to the exclusion of pragmatic competence. To consider another example: many language experience-based programs narrowly emphasise pragmatic and semantic competence, excluding coding and critical competences. As Scribner and Cole (1981) demonstrate in the Vai study, differing instructional models and curricular emphases generate differing cognitive and social consequences and effects.

It is thus not a question of which program or emphasis is correct. It is ultimately a normative, political question of what educators think reading <u>should</u> entail. Each school system, classroom and teacher is faced with a set of decisions about how to shape literate traditions, communities and practices. To decide requires both:

> (1) an empirical description of what kinds of reading practice are powerful, functional and valuable in late-capitalist societies;
>
> (2) a normative prescription of what kinds of reading practice citizens should have for critical participation in these same societies.

I would argue that a socially critical literacy program would systematically introduce children to the four elements of reading practice - not hierarchically, not developmentally, but at all stages of literacy instruction.

I repeat: this is not a hierarchy and the 'pragmatic' and 'critical' components of reading cannot be seen as add-ons to emerge in secondary school instruction or later, if at all. Consider this typical situation: in many school programs students are assessed as more 'successful' readers and writers if they are prey to manipulative texts than if they cannot decode or spell. As illustrated in the historical and cross-cultural scenes which began my discussion here, reading can

effect both opportunity and exploitation, both intellectual possibility and constraint. Initiation into the role of code-breaker, text-participant, and text-user can open up new and powerful forms of bureaucratic colonisation and economic exploitation, unless that training offers tools of critical discourse analysis and critique.

What have been called "postmodern" and "late-capitalist" socioeconomic and cultural configurations in countries like Australia and New Zealand present postmodern challenges to educators: specifically, the growth and spread of an economic and cultural underclass; employment which is as likely to be 'deskilled' and exploitative as it is to require more elaborated forms of literacy (Harvey, 1988); and, relatedly, the emergence of ever more powerful texts of mass culture which, quite literally, capitalise on constructing and positioning peoples' bodies and identities (Luke, in press/b). In this context, nothing short of a critical social literacy will suffice. Students will be quite literally defenceless - unless they know how to crack the code; how to construct meaning from text; how to use 'reading' to achieve specific social purposes in particular social contexts; and how to use reading to critically appraise texts, ideologies and the world around them.

Acknowledgment

The model of reading presented here was developed with Peter Freebody (see Freebody & Luke, 1990). The discussion of critical literacy and discourse analysis is elaborated in Freebody, Luke & Gilbert (1991) and Baker & Luke (1991).

References

Apple, M.W. & Christian-Smith, L.C. eds. 1990. The Politics of the Textbook. New York: Routledge.

Baker,C.D. & Luke, A. eds. 1991. Towards a Critical Sociology of Reading Pedagogy. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Cook-Gumperz, J. ed. 1986. The Social Construction of Literacy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cole, M. 1988. Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline. In J. Berman, ed., Nebraska Symposium on Motivation: Cross-Cultural Perspectives. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Cole, M. & Griffin, P. 1986. A sociohistorical approach to remediation. In S. deCastell, A. Luke & K. Egan, eds., Literacy, Society and Schooling. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (pp. 110-131).

Edelsky, C. 1991. With Literacy and Justice for All. London: Falmer Press.

Fairclough, N. 1989. Language and Power. London: Longman.

Fiore, K. & Elsasser, N. 1988. 'Strangers no more: A liberatory literacy curriculum'. In E. Kintgen, B. Kroll & M. Rose, eds. Perspectives on Literacy. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Freebody, P. & Luke, A. 1990. 'Literacies' programs: Debate and demands in cultural context. Prospect: A Journal of Australian TESOL 5(3), 7-16.

Freebody, P., Luke, A. & Gilbert, P. 1991. Reading positions and practices in the classroom. Curriculum Inquiry 21, 435-437.

Freire, P. & Macedo, D. 1977. Literacy: Reading the World and the Word. South Hadley: Bergin & Garvey.

Gee, J.P. 1990. Social Linguistics and Literacies. London: Falmer Press.

Graff, H.J. 1987. The Legacies of Literacy. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Harvey, D. 1988. The Condition of Postmodernity. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Heath, S.B. 1986. What no bedtimes story means: Narrative skills at home and school. In B.B. Schieffelin & E. Ochs, eds., Language Socialization Across Cultures. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johnston, P.H. 1985. Understanding reading disability. Harvard Educational Review 55, 153-77.

Kress, G. 1985. Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice. Geelong: Deakin University Press.

Lankshear, C. with Lawler, M. 1987. Literacy and Revolution. London: Falmer Press.

Luke, A. 1988. Literacy, Textbooks and Ideology. London: Falmer Press.

Luke, A. in press/a. On reading and the sexual division of literacy. Journal of Curriculum Studies.

Luke, A. in press/b. The body literate: Discourse and inscription in early literacy instruction. Linguistics and Education.

Luke, A. in press/c. The Social Construction of Literacy in the Primary School. Melbourne: Macmillan.

Luke, C. 1991. On reading the child: A feminist

poststructuralist perspective. Australian Journal of Reading. 14, 109-116.

Luke, C., deCastell, S.C. & Luke, A. 1989. Beyond criticism: The authority of the school textbook. In S. deCastell, A. Luke & C. Luke, eds., Language, Authority and Criticism: Readings on the School Textbook. London: Falmer Press.

Newman, D., Griffin, P. & Cole, M. 1989. The Construction Zone. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scribner, S. & Cole, M. 1981. The Psychology of Literacy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Stanovich, K. 1986. Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. Reading Research Quarterly 21, 360-407.

Threadgold, T. 1989. Talking about genre: Ideologies and incompatible discourses. Cultural Studies 3, 101-132.

Williams, R. 1977. Marxism and Literature. Oxford: Oxford University Press.